CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Date: NOV 17 1959

To: The Secretary

Through: S/S

From: ARA - Mr. Rubottom

Subject: Cuban Note Presented to Ambassador Bonsal on November 13.

Although the Cuban note of November 1[illegible] (TAB A) is considerably less violent in tone and attitude than we had expected it would be it nevertheless contains beneath its turgid prose a firm reiteration of the Cuban point of view and a rejection of the U.S. position on the various issues with which it treats. As Ambassador Bonsal observed in his cable of November 16 (TAB B) "this note will be generally well received in Cuba as an expression of the nationalistic attitudes cherished by the present Government and its supporters as well as by most of its opponents." Even former Cuban UN Ambassador Dr. Nuñez Portuondo, presently Castro's most vocal opponent in the United States, has referred to the note in a private conversation as "very clever" and "well written". I find its cleverness extremely superficial but I believe its propaganda value is such that the U.S. will wish to rebut many of its assertions by a reply note or otherwise.

Perhaps the most interesting points raised in the note are the request that our sugar trade should be governed by a bilateral trade agreement and the suggestion that it is "premature to judge beforehand that such solutions as Cuba may propose [regarding expropriation] will deviate from international law." We have also noted the absence of a reference to "the bombing and machine-gunning of Habana citizens" in connection with the Diaz Lanz incident. We are giving immediate attention as to how best to answer the inaccurate but extremely persuasive argument that the United States has been the "favored party" in the commercial relations between the two countries.

Attachments:

1. TAB A - Cuban Note of November 13.
2. TAB B - Telegram No. 1122, November 16.

ARA:CMA:RAStevenson:efb
11/17/59

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY D. ZISCHKE DATE 11/9/81
RDS or EXEMPT. DATE
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